ODP 81-793
2 3 JUN 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration

FROM: Bruce T. Johnson
                 Director of Data Processing

SUBJECT: IHSA Draft Report to EXCOM

1.   In the attachment, identified by paragraph and page
number, are comments reflecting my concerns about specific
portions of the Draft IHSA report. More general comments follow
below.

2.   As we discussed during our meeting on Wednesday,
17 June, many of the "key problems" covered by the report are more
properly the concern of the DDA, not the EXCOM. But even those
items which require EXCOM attention should be subjected to
coordination at the Directorate level before being elevated for
EXCOM review.

3.   During the sometimes heated debate which preceded the
decision to create an Architect's position and thus enhance the
Agency's ability to plan effectively for tomorrow's information
systems, the question arose whether this new function should have
line authority. In short, did the Agency need an information
czar? In the most dramatic option considered, such a czar would
have been set up as a Deputy Director for Information, but other
possibilities for exercising authority were also discussed, and
all were vociferously rejected. In its final report the Informa-
tion Handling Task Force concluded: "In sum, it was the concensus
of the Executive Committee that the only change in Agency level
management justified at this time is the creation of a System
Architecture function to plan for future information systems from
the broader Agency viewpoint." (Emphasis added.) The draft
report largely ignores the long range planning function which was
to be the principal function of the IHSA, and puts forth proposals
which would in fact create the kind of line management authority
rejected by the previous EXCOM when deciding to establish the
position. I strongly oppose establishing such line authority for
the IHSA, and believe the DO's will do so as well.

4. The report should be completely recast to emphasize
planning, data collection, data flow, standards, training, etc.
All proposals for modification of existing review and approval
processes should be removed, and a set of procedures should be
developed and carefully coordinated before submission to the
EXCOM. Ratification of these procedures can then be based on the
knowledge that the DD's and their staffs have had a hand in the
development process. Concurrently, a new statement of IHSA
functions and responsibilities, based on the IHTF study, should be
submitted for coordination.

/s/ Bruce T. Johnson

Bruce T. Johnson

Att: a/s

cc: IHSA

O/D/ODP/BJohnson:ee/23 Jun 81

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19 June 1981

D/ODP Comments on
"Review of the IHS Architectural Functions in the Agency"

Section 1, third paragraph (Page 2)

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[blank] defines ODP's responsibilities in applications development and in reviewing proposed acquisitions of ADP equipment and systems. It does not define ODP's charter, which

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is in [blank]

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[blank] of 16 March 1981 was not coordinated and, as written, could not have obtained Agency-wide coordination. The reference ignores DDA's decision to return to the charter as enunciated by the IHTF.

Section 1, fourth paragraph (Page 2)

This discussion of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 omits reference to the requirement that the senior IHS official also exercise any delegations of procurement authority issued under the Brooks Act by GSA. Any recommendation which does not also cover the all-important DPA would be deficient. (ADDA has a copy of ODP's paper to OGC on this subject.)

Section 2, first paragraph (Page 3)

I am not familiar with the "old aphorism", but in ODP-developed systems users and developers set requirements. They need access to information about ways in which the proposed system relates to other, possibly unseen requirements. We don't need accreditation, we need a dependable cross-directorate source of information and guidance.

Section 2, third paragraph (Page 4)

I don't understand this. PERSIGN surely has as many potential "adjunct" users as any system we've ever built. (Perhaps we need a definition of "adjunct user.") LIMS will replace many dissimilar smaller logistics systems. Is that bad?

Section 4 (Pages 7, 8)

Robustness is a legitimate goal, and ODP welcomes support for our on-going effort to improve availability and reliability. The discussion here is confusing however, stating on the one hand that a lack of robustness leads to lowered availability but on the other that robustness contributes little to performance. In ODP reliability is the number one priority, and with each incremental modification we grow more "robust," in terms of system availability. Still lacking, of course, is a remote back-up center, which would indeed cost money and not add commensurately to daily availability, unless disaster struck one of our centers.

The reader is led by this section to conclude that there exists no commitment to user friendliness today. On the contrary, user convenience dictated much of the design of the DD 7260, and is the watchword of the development of the user language for SAFE. We picked GIMS in 1971 because of its strong user language.

Section 5 (Page 8)

This Agency has always depended on contractors for the majority of scientific programming support. The central investment in such support in ODP has never been large. As noted in a recent report to the DDA on Scientific Programming Support to NFAC (ODP 81-296 dated 6 March 1981), we have increased our contract support for OSWR and are negotiating for additional rotational slots where we can place resident specialists with the requisite skills. Apparently the IHSA has identified some other needs not known to us. I would like to know what they are. What specific problems are we trying to solve?

Section 6, first paragraph (Page 9)

IHS appears to be equated here with ADP technology. The IHTF (page 1-3) defined IHS much more broadly, and I believe the separate treatment of IHS and ADP is useful, the latter being only a subset of the former.

Section 6, seventh paragraph (Page 10)

I don't know how or on what basis the IHSA arrived at these conclusions, but I would greatly appreciate an opportunity to have our management of on-line storage audited carefully before statements of this kind are presented to the EXCOM. A "use it or lose it" policy has been in effect in ODP/Engineering for some years. Are we trying to maximize the efficiency of people (growing more expensive) or machines (growing cheaper)?

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Section 6, ninth paragraph (Page 10)

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ODP should have an opportunity to be heard on these matters
before these issues go to the EXCOM. It might interest the IHSA
to know that if measured in constant dollars the non-personal
services of ODP which cost [   ] in 1979 will be delivered in FY
83 for $2 million less, while our capacity will have increased by
60% to 85%, depending on the type of service in question. What
"efficiency" problems are we trying to solve?

Section 6, eleventh paragraph (Page 11)

We already have nearly [   ]   25X1
concurrent users as our service base in VM. The increase refers
to is, I assume, in part SAFE, for which a new center is being
installed. What is the basis of these figures?

Section 6, paragraphs 12 and 13 (Page 11)

How do NARS regulations, archaic or otherwise, relate to the
question of efficient use of computer resources? I too am
concerned about digital records in the records management
environment, but NARS regulations, except for those governing
procurement, do not figure largely, if at all, in our day-to-day
management of ADP resources. What is meant by "wasteful and non-
productive service and administrator requirements"?

Recommendation 1 (Page 12)

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The proposed format leaves unclear how organizations like OC and
ODP with [   ] programs, all involving "IHS's,"
would do their jobs. The procedures outlined here would involve
the EXCOM in the day-to-day management of these offices.

I do not quarrel with the split of responsibilities suggested
here, with ADPE review in ODP and "systems" (needs defining)
review in IHSA. I do not see how the IHSA staff can "delegate"
responsibility to a line organization, but am prepared to have
"embedded ADPE" referred to ODP for review. The division should
be stated in relevant regulation, not left to "delegation."

Recommendation 2 (Page 12)

No problem.

Recommendation 3 (Page 13)

As the IHSA and OTE know, I consider the study at Appendix B to
be a flawed document. I urge DDA to consider carefully before
submitting it in its present form to the EXCOM. The data behind
the study are shakey, and the conclusions may be quite
misleading. That we need to increase our committment to training
in the uses of information technology is not contested,
however.

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Recommendation 4 (Page 13)

This issue of tasking authority came up during last year's EXCOM
debate and was noisily opposed. I predict strong opposition this
time as well, and share in that opposition.

Authority to review and "adjust" resource allocations is also
likely to run into a corporate buzz-saw.

Recommendation 5 (Page 14)

25X1 Of the [   ] in the enhanced package for 1983, [   ] are for ODP,   25X1
and all are allocated to high-priority needs, such as [   ] to the   25X1
new payroll. If we are to be asked to create a scientific pro-
gramming unit the positions will have to be provided.

Recommendation 6 (Page 14)

The "IHS services" referred to are in fact central ADP services,
which is to say ODP services. Before we undertake "to develop a
set of recommended techniques for controlling the efficiency of
utilities" for these services we should review the current
service philosophy which governs our management of ADP resources
and ascertain whether we have a real problem. What "inefficiency"
problems are we trying to solve?

Recommendation 7 (Page 14)

If this means bypassing coordination, I disagree.